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During 1965-68, the Los Angeles City Schools conducted a community involvement reading program for parents, teachers, volunteer workers, and other adults interested in teaching children how to read. Twelve teacher hours of instruction were divided either into six two-hour or four three-hour segments. The reading method Formula Phonics," is a learning theory approach to teaching, and uses an integrated word-attack system taught in a manner and setting which help remove a pupil's anxiety through his making correct responses. Comments from participants and principals indicated that (1) the project was highly effective in teaching adults the techniques of reading instruction, (2) the instructor's personality and the clear, interesting presentation of meaningful well organized materials contributed greatly to program effectiveness, (3) the brevity of the courses did not permit some participants to practice and review their findings, and (4) home instruction was the major use of course learnings. It was recommended that the courses be continued and expanded and that additional research be done. The document includes samples of phonics materials. (ly)

EVALUATION

ADULT EDUCATION PROJECT

READING TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTS

1965 - 1968

ED023017

Office of Research and Development
Los Angeles City Schools

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PROJECT: READING TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTS

1.00 DESCRIPTION

Classes authorized through Parent Education Services of the Division of Adult Education were conducted for parents, teachers, volunteer workers, and other adults interested in teaching children how to read. Twelve teacher hours of instruction were divided into either six two-hour or four three-hour segments. Classes were held in elementary and junior high school auditoriums, and enrollments were limited only by the size of the meeting rooms. The courses were announced by the adult school through the regular communications media and in flyers distributed by all schools in the area where classes were held.

The reading method taught in the classes is called "Formula Phonics," a learning-theory approach to teaching reading, described as an integrative word-attack system, taught in a manner and setting which allow for the reduction and eventual extinction of anxiety in the pupil through his making correct responses. In this method the teacher, parent, tutor, or volunteer, as an operant conditioner, "programs" the word-attack system into the pupil, then uses the techniques of contingency management to reinforce the "programmed" elements. The method also employs games and spelling techniques as positive reinforcers. The system is used to teach reading initially or in any stage of remediation, second grade through adult. It requires no expensive equipment or materials -- only a pencil, writing paper, and reading material -- the level of which is not greatly important. In January, 1968, the course was modified to include more learning theory in the introductory phase.

2.00 OBJECTIVES

To assess the effectiveness of the project in teaching adults the instructional techniques used in teaching reading

To identify specific strengths and weaknesses of the project

3.00 IMPLEMENTATION

3.10 Duration of Project and Number of Schools

This project began in 1965 and has continued through the 1967-1968 school year. Twenty-nine elementary and seven junior high school sites have served separate project offerings.

3.20 Students

Students in the classes included teachers, parents, volunteer workers, and other interested persons. Two thousand six hundred eighty-eight persons enrolled in the classes. Residuary beneficiaries of the class were children aided in turn by the adults who took the course.

Table A shows the composition of the classes. Students who took the course in March, 1968, at two school sites, are shown separately for comparison. Throughout the study, the participants who took the course before March, 1968 are

designated as "Group I," and the March, 1968 participants as "Group II." Group II has a higher percentage of volunteers.

TABLE A

CLASSIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS*

GROUP	N	FREQUENCY Teacher No. %	Volunteer No. %	Parent No. %	Other No. %
Group I Original Study Group Sample	130	8 6	6 5	113 87	3 2
Group II Recent Study Group	87	9 10	27 31	48 56	3 3

*Although classifications are not mutually exclusive, participants were asked to indicate a category.

3.40 Activities

The participants were taught by a combination of lectures, demonstrations, and class participation. No children were used in the demonstrations. Class members were issued a five-page mimeographed booklet entitled "Pals, Rules, Sounds, and the Formula," containing the elements to be "programmed" into the child. The book was used in recitation and homework in which the class was assigned the responsibilities of learning a body of knowledge and practicing skills.

Participants studied diagnostic techniques, an integrative method of word-attack, and the development of language and the alphabet.

They investigated vowel and consonant sounds, phonic units, and blends. They studied the "formula" for teaching word-attack, comprehension, and vocabulary.

The students also studied spelling as a reinforcement to reading, and participated in word games and drills.

4.00 EVALUATION

4.00 Design

Objectives of the project were evaluated according to ratings of administrators and class participants, expressed in response to a questionnaire mailed to principals of all schools where the classes were held, and to a randomly selected sample of the participants in the original study group (Group I).

Questionnaires were given to all participants in the comparison group (Group II), on the initiative of the program director, at the end of the course for mailing to the Office of Research and Development.

4.20 Attainment of Objectives

4.21 To Assess the Effectiveness of the Project in Teaching Adults the Instructional Techniques Used in Teaching Reading

One hundred thirty-one class participants, sixty-two percent of the original group sample queried, responded to the mailed questionnaire. Eighty-seven participants, fifty-seven percent of the comparison group, returned questionnaires. Ninety-three percent of the principals in the original study group responded while one of the two principals of the comparison group replied. Table B shows how Groups I and II, as well as their principals, rated the effectiveness of the projects. Medians are uniformly high, providing a descriptive rating between "much value" and "very much value". Group II ratings are higher than those of Group I.

TABLE B

RATING OF PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS BY PARTICIPANTS AND PRINCIPALS

GROUP	N	Very Little or No Value 1	Little Value 2	Much Value 3	Very Much Value 4	MEDIAN
Group I - Participants	124	8	23	51	42	3.1
Group I - Principals	14	1	3	5	10	3.6
Group II - Participants	87		3	25	59	3.8
Group II - Principals	1				1	4.0

Table C summarizes all comments by participants and principals in support of their ratings of project effectiveness. The comments of the ninety-eight respondents and five principals in Group I were in the ratio of four positive to one negative; Group II comments were forty-eight positive to one negative.

TABLE C

CATEGORIES OF COMMENTS ON COURSE VALUE

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY Group I	Group II	Principals
Positive:			
Adult attributed marked improvement in child's proficiency, marks, and test scores to course	20	6	0
Provided adult with techniques and skills to help child	19	8	0
Impressive class presentation ("interesting, stimulating, inspiring")	13	8	1
Helpful in participant's personal development through acquisition of information and reading skill	10	11	0
Laudatory comment without explanation ("great, fantastic, terrific, wonderful")	9	15	3
Helped adult understand child and his reading problems	6	0	0
Negative:			
Too difficult (complex) to transmit to children	6	1	0
Course added nothing new	5	0	0
Won't work with older children	4	0	0
Method not needed since child could read	4	0	0
Deprecatory comment, with no explanation ("of little value")	2	0	1

One hundred sixteen Group I persons indicated that they would recommend the course to their friends and acquaintances; eight said they would not.

Of Group II, all seventy-nine respondents to the items said they would recommend the class.

4.22 To Identify Specific Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project

Table D portrays the categories of comments on the strengths of the class. Class presentation was the strength most frequently cited by all groups. They indicated that the course was highly structured, practical, and taught with great skill. The second-greatest strength was the personality of the instructor. Participants and principals said that his enthusiasm was contagious, inspiring them to believe that they could help children. They noted that his use of humor relieved the tedium of three-hour sessions. The Formula Phonics methodology was the third-greatest strength in frequency of comment. Participants cited its consonance with accepted learning theory and its ease of application. Some participants attributed dramatic changes in children's achievement to use of the method.

TABLE D

CATEGORIES OF COMMENTS ON STRENGTHS OF CLASS

COMMENT	FREQUENCY* Group I	Group II	Principals
Clear, interesting presentation of well-organized, meaningful materials	58	29	7
Personality of teacher -- "enthusiasm, humor..."	29	28	3
Psychological and educational validity of formula phonics method	18	21	3
Efficacy of method with children -- immediate positive results	15	6	6
Interest and participation of class members	10	7	2

*Frequency of comments, not participants

Table E is a summary of comments on course weaknesses. Seventeen participants in Group I, fourteen in Group II, and three principals specified "no weaknesses" or "none" when asked to comment. The chief weakness, as seen by the participants, was the inclusion of too much material in too short a time for class participation and assimilation. Other weaknesses cited by a few respondents included: uncomfortable facilities for long sessions; assertion that the method contributed nothing new; lack of sufficient printed materials; and the impeding of the class by the instructor's review and the participants' questions. Principals made two comments not made by any participant. Four elementary principals stated that the course should be taught by an elementary-oriented teacher. Three principals said that the classes were given poor publicity.

TABLE E

CATEGORIES OF COMMENTS ON WEAKNESSES OF PROGRAM

COMMENT	FREQUENCY* Group I	Group II	Principals
Too much material in too short a time	26	19	1
Uncomfortable facilities for long sessions	5	0	0
Method is oversimplified -- "too pat, too neat a package; nothing new"	4	0	0
Need more printed materials; *method too complicated*	2	6	1
Class slowed by review and questions	2	6	0

*Frequency of comments, not participants

Table F summarizes the suggestions for improvement. Most frequently mentioned was lengthening the course to allow more time for class participation, review, and follow-up. One hundred respondents -- sixty, Group I; thirty-six, Group II; and four principals offered suggestions.

TABLE F

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

SUGGESTION	FREQUENCY Group I	Group II	Principals
Add sessions for participation, review, and follow-up.	14	4	1
Provide more printed materials, text, syllabus, and game rules.	6	6	0
Practice more on sounds and rules in class.	4	8	0
Have demonstrations with children.	3	4	0

Thirty-three Group I and fourteen Group II respondents stated the equivalent of "fine as given; reach more people." Two principals suggested that the course should be taught by an elementary teacher. One principal recommended better publicity. Seven principals believed that the course should be offered once a year in their schools; three recommended once every other year; two specified once a semester; two said once every three years; and one said "never".

The use to which learnings were put are shown in Table G. Home teaching was the major use designated by both groups. The greater percentage of volunteers in Group II, however, appreciably raised the number of participants who reported classroom and volunteer teaching.

TABLE G

USE OF COURSE LEARNINGS BY PARTICIPANTS

USE	FREQUENCY* Group I		Group II	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Instruction	94	74	61	54
Classroom Teaching	21	16	21	18
Volunteer Teaching	11	9	30	26
Self-Improvement	1	1	2	2

*Some participants reported multiple uses; hence numbers and percentages are of uses, not participants.

Sixty-five persons in Group I reported that attendance increased after the first class meeting; nineteen indicated that it had not. In Group II, seventy-nine believed that attendance had increased, and eight that it had not. Attendance data indicate that enrollment and attendance were sustained in most of the schools.

4.30 Outcomes

- According to ratings by class participants and principals, the course was of a quality between "much value" and "very much value".

- The major strength of the course was the clear, interesting presentation of well-organized, meaningful materials.

- The instructor's personality was the second most-often cited strength.

- The principal weakness cited was the lack of time to assimilate and utilize learning during the conduct of the course.

- The most frequent suggestions were to add sessions to the course to provide time for more class participation, feedback, practice of course learnings, and follow-up.

- The majority of participants indicated that they would recommend the course to their friends and acquaintances.

- The majority of participants said that attendance was sustained.

- In most areas of evaluation, the comparison group rated the project higher than did the original study-group sample.

- The majority of participants utilized the learnings of the course in home instruction.

5.00 CONCLUSIONS

- The project, as rated by participants and principals, was highly effective in instructing adults in teaching techniques in reading.

- The personality of the instructor was an important factor in the effectiveness of the course.

- The short duration of the course did not provide sufficient time for some participants to practice and review their learnings.

- Home instruction is the major use of course learnings.

6.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

The course should be continued, and expanded to serve more parents, teachers, and volunteers.

7.00 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Institute controlled experiments to measure the effectiveness of the method by testing children taught by the method. These experiments should include: 1) comparison of Formula Phonics with other methods currently in use; 2) comparison of classes taught by different Formula Phonics instructors to determine how important the teacher is as a factor in the presentation; 3) Experimentation with varying the length of the sessions and the course; 4) the use of children, in person and filmed sequences, in demonstration of the method; and 5) the use of additional printed materials.

PALS, RULES, SOUNDS, AND THE FORMULA

Edward O. Vail, M. A.

* * *

"Reading is the putting of understood parts (words) into a continuously growing and understood whole (phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and all else that may be written)."

* * *

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1961 @ A Fundamental Approach to a Uniform School-Wide Reading Program
1966 @ Formula Phonics

Los Angeles City Schools
Office of the Superintendent
Office of Urban Affairs
School Volunteer and Tutorial Programs

PALS AND RULES USE IN READING AND SPELLING

"Pals" are combinations of two, four or five letters which add extra sounds to the alphabet. Rules are used to tell you which sound a consonant, a vowel, or a "pal" must take. In this way, as many as five letters can be no more difficult to read than a single letter. The "pal" ATION contains five letters and four sounds, yet you consider it as a single unit with a single sound. There is no rule to learn or vowel to mark; you need only remember that the "pal" ATION says A SHUN.

You should know that:

(1) These consonants have only one sound:

(a) Exploding Sounds

B -- the first sound you hear in BAD
D -- the first sound you hear in DAD
J -- the first sound you hear in JET
K -- the first sound you hear in KIT
P -- the first sound you hear in PAT
T -- the first sound you hear in TAP

(b) Friction Sounds

F -- the first sound you hear in FAN
S -- the first sound you hear in SAT
V -- the first sound you hear in VAN
Z -- the first sound you hear in ZIP

(c) Open Sounds

H -- the first sound you hear in HAT
L -- the first sound you hear in LAP
R -- the first sound you hear in RAT

(d) Nose Sounds

M -- the first sound you hear in MAN
N -- the first sound you hear in NAP

(e) Crazy Sounds

QU -- the first sound you hear in QUICK
X -- the last sound you hear in FOX

(2) These consonants have two sounds:

(a) C -- always takes the K sound as in ¢AT (k), unless it is followed by E-I or Y, then it takes the S sound as in ¢ITY; ¢IVI¢ (s s k).

(b) G -- may take the J sound only if followed by E-I or Y as in ¢EM (j). (But it doesn't have to -- GET or GIVE). Usually G takes its own sound as in GO.

(3) These letters are sometimes vowels and sometimes consonants.

(a) W -- If the first or second letter in a word makes the W sound (WIN, TWICE); anyplace else in a word it is silent.

(b) Y -- If it is the first letter in a word, it makes the Y sound (YET); if it is the last letter in a word, it says E or I's name. (HAPPY, SPRY) Always try the Ē sound first. If Y occurs anywhere else in a word, it will make an I sound (MYSTERY, DYNAMO).

(4) The five vowels either say their own name or the soft sound.

OWN NAME	SOFT SOUND
Ā -- as in ABLE	ă -- as in AT
Ē -- as in ME	ĕ -- as in ED
Ī -- as in ICE	ĭ -- as in IT
Ō -- as in OPEN	ŏ -- as in ON
Ū -- as in USE	ŭ -- as in UP

(5) These are the consonant "pals".

PH -- takes F's sound.

TH -- has two sounds; learn only the first sound you hear in THIN.

SH -- has the first sound you hear in SHIP.

CH -- has three sounds.

(a) Try the first sound you hear in CHAIR, first. (Latin)
(b) Try the K sound you hear in SCHOOL, second. (Greek)
(c) Try the SH sound you hear in CHICAGO, third. (French)

(6) These are the vowel "pals".

AU -- takes O's soft sound. (AUTHOR)

AW -- takes O's soft sound. (AWFUL)

EW -- takes the last sound you hear in NEW.

OI -- takes the second sound you hear in VOICE.

OO -- takes any one of these sounds.

(a) Try the second sound you hear in BOOT, first.
(b) Try the second sound you hear in BOOK, second.
(c) Try O's own name as you hear in DOOR, last.

OU -- takes the first sound you hear in OUT.

OW -- takes one of two sounds.

(a) Try the last sound you hear in COW, first.
(b) Try the last sound you hear in SHOW, second.

IE -- usually takes the name of E (BRIEF); if not, it says I's name (SCIENCE).

(7) These are the two letter "pals" with an E:

EF -- takes F's own name, the first sound you hear in EFFORT.

EL -- takes L's own name, the second sound you hear in HELP.

EM -- takes M's own name, the second sound you hear in LEMON.

EN -- takes N's own name, the first sound you hear in END.

ES -- takes S;s own name, the second sound you hear in REST.

EX -- takes X's own name, the first sound you hear in EXTRA.

(8) These are the R "pals":

AR -- takes R's own name, the first sound you hear in ART.

ER -- takes R's sound. (The E is silent.) HER)

IR -- takes R's sound. (The I is silent.) GIRL) NOTICE: These three "pals" all say the same thing.

UR -- takes R's sound. (The U is silent.) CURL)

OR -- takes the sound of the little word OR.

(9) These are the ING family "pals":

ANG -- says everything you hear after B's sound in BANG.

ENG -- says everything you hear between R and TH sounds in STRENGTH.

ING -- says everything you hear after W's sound in WING.

ONG -- says everything you hear after S's sound in SONG.

UNG -- says everything you hear after L's sound in LUNG.

(10) These are the NK "pals":

ANK -- says everything you hear after B's sound in BANK.

INK -- says everything you hear after S's sound in SINK.

(11) These are the combination "pals":

OUS -- says the little word "US". FAMOUS

IOUS -- says E's own name, plus the little word "US". SERIOUS

TION -- says SHUN, everything you hear after the K sound in ACTION.

SION -- says SHUN, everything you hear after the soft I sound in OMISSION.

ATION -- This is the longest "pal" in English. It says everything you hear after N's sound in NATION.

RULES

Here are four rules you should know:

1. The letter K before the letter N is silent (KNIGHT).
2. The letter G before the letter N is silent (GNOME).
3. IGH RULE: The I says its own name, and the G and H are silent (NIGHT).
4. UGH RULE:

   a. Usually the UGH is silent (TAUGHT).
   b. In a few words, the UGH takes F's sound.

      f f f f f

   (ROUGH, TOUGH, COUGH, ENOUGH, DRAUGHT)

VOWEL LAWS

1. There must be a vowel in every word, and in every syllable, but it doesn't have to sound out.
2. We always assume a vowel is soft, unless we can prove otherwise.

VOWEL RULES

1. The Double Vowel Rule: (MEAT)

   "When two vowels go walking,
   The first one does the talking
   And when it talks, it says its own name."

2. The Silent E Rule:

   a. An E, if the last letter in a word, is silent (BITE).
   b. The E is usually there to make the next vowel over say its own name (BITE).

3. A vowel says what it must (GOLD).

THE FORMULA

Here is the Formula you use in word attack. If you cannot figure out a word any other way, use the formula.

FIRST: If there is a suffix, take it off.

SECOND: Find the "Pals" and mark them.

THIRD: Find and mark any letters which must change their sounds.

FOURTH: Mark out any silent letters.

FIFTH: Mark the remaining vowels with a straight line, or a rocker.

SIXTH: Sound out the word, building each new sound on the sounds before.

1. A C C E L E R A T E (D) — Remove suffix (just the D).
2. A C C E L E R A T E (D) — Underline "pals".
3. A C C E L E R A T E (D) — Mark letters which change sounds. (k s)
4. A C C E L E R A T E (D) — Mark out silent letters. (k s)
5. A C C E L E R Ā T E (D) — Mark the remaining vowels. (k s)

a. A
b. A K
c. A K S
d. A K S L
e. A K S L R
f. A K S L R Ā
g. A K S L R Ā T
h. A K S L R Ā T E D

SEVENTH: Decide if the word you sounded out makes sense in the sentence.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THE WORD MEANS, YOU HAVE ONLY SAID IT, NOT READ IT!

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS

TO: Principals of Schools Concerned **Date** March 21, 1968

FROM: Office of Research and Development
By: Jack Reynolds, Consultant

SUBJECT: QUESTIONNAIRE -- READING TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTS

During _____, a "Reading Techniques for Parents" class was conducted by Mr. Edward O. (Ted) Vail at _____ School, under the auspices of the Adult Education Office. Your assistance in completing and forwarding responses to the questions below by April 15, 1968 will help to determine the value of the class and/or its continuance without modification.

Your recollection of the course offering may be aided by the following: It was a 12-hour course, consisting of six two-hour sessions during 1965-66, or four three-hour meetings, if held since September, 1966. The only written material distributed to participants was a five-page guideline (known as a "PAL" sheet) containing necessary substantive elements.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Did you personally attend the course? YES____ NO____

2. If yes, circle the total number of sessions attended. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Please estimate the course attendance (in percent) of each classification listed:

   a. your teaching staff members _____%

   b. your PTA members _____%

   c. active school volunteers _____%

   d. other community residents _____%

   Total: 100 %

4. How would you rate the value derived from the course? (circle)

NONE			MUCH
1	2	3	4

_____

_____

5. Check use or uses to which learnings were put:

   a. classroom teaching YES____ NO____

   b. home instruction YES____ NO____

   c. volunteer teaching YES____ NO____

   d. other (Explain.) _____

6. Did enrollment increase after the first class meeting? YES____ NO____

7. How often should this course be offered in your school? _____

   _____

8. What were the strengths of the class? _____

   _____

9. Please identify course weaknesses. _____

   _____

10. Please note suggestions for course improvements.

APPROVED BY ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENTS:

ROBERT J. PURDY
Division of Elementary Education

ROBERT E. KELLY
Division of Secondary Education

WILLIAM J. JOHNSTON
Division of Adult Education

Fold along this line; staple, and return by school mail.

RETURN TO: OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Administrative Offices, G-280

BY: April 15, 1968

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
Los Angeles City Schools

March 21, 1968

TO: Class Participants

FROM: Office of Research and Development

SUBJECT: QUESTIONNAIRE -- READING TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTS

During _____, a "Reading Techniques for Parents" class was conducted by Mr. Edward O. (Ted) Vail at _____ School under the auspices of the Adult Education Office. Your assistance in completing and forwarding responses to the questions below by April 15, 1968 will help to determine the value of the class and/or its continuance without modification.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which of the following would best describe you when you took the course?

   (Check one only.) Teacher____ Volunteer____ Parent____ College Tutor____
   Other____

2. Circle total number of sessions you attended. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Of how much value was this course? (Circle.)

Very Little or No Value	Little Value	Much Value	Very Much Value

(Please comment.) _____

_____

4. Check where course techniques were used.

   a. classroom teaching YES____ NO____
   b. home instruction YES____ NO____
   c. volunteer teaching YES____ NO____
   d. other (Identify. Please comment.)

_____

_____

5. Did enrollment increase after the first class meeting? YES____ NO____

6. Would you recommend the course to your friends or people you know? YES____ NO____

7. What were the strengths of the class?

_____

_____

8. What were the weaknesses? _____

_____

9. Please note suggestions for course improvement or other comments you care to make.

ERIC Clearinghouse
JUL 31 1968
on Adult Education

Please Return To:
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
450 North Grand Avenue G-280
Los Angeles, California 90012

Stamped envelope enclosed